

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (withdrawn): A tibial component of a knee prosthesis comprising:

- a tray having top and bottom surfaces;
- a keel having a top end and a bottom end, the keel being engageable with the bottom surface of the tray, the keel and tray forming a male/female junction; and
- a rotational alignment pin extending from one of the tray and keel and a pin receiving bore located on the other of the tray and keel to facilitate aligning the tray and keel in predetermined relationship for assembly.

Claim 2 (withdrawn): The tibial component of claim 1 wherein the rotational alignment pin prevents the junction from seating unless the rotational alignment pin is aligned with the pin receiving bore.

Claim 3 (withdrawn): The tibial component of claim 1 wherein the male/female junction comprises a boss extending from one of the tray and keel and a boss receiving bore formed in one of the tray and keel, the boss and boss receiving bore being coaxial about a junction axis, the rotational alignment pin and pin receiving bore being coaxial about an alignment axis parallel to the junction axis.

Claim 4 (withdrawn): The tibial component of claim 3 wherein the alignment pin and pin receiving bore are located within the male/female junction.

Claim 5 (withdrawn): The tibial component of claim 4 wherein the boss extends downwardly from the bottom surface of the tray and the boss receiving bore extends downwardly from the top end of the keel.

Claim 6 (withdrawn): The tibial component of claim 1 wherein the rotational alignment pin has a first portion extending away from one of the tray and keel and a second portion extending from the first portion further away from said one of the tray and keel, the second portion having a smaller cross sectional dimension than the first portion such that the second portion may be first received by the pin receiving bore when the tray and keel are not rotationally aligned.

Claim 7 (withdrawn): The tibial component of claim 6 wherein the cross sectional dimension of the first portion is approximately equal to a corresponding cross sectional dimension of the pin receiving bore.

Claim 8 (withdrawn): The tibial component of claim 6 wherein the rotational alignment pin is tapered between the first and second portions such that upon assembly of the male/female junction with the tray and keel out of rotational alignment, the second portion is received by the pin receiving bore and the taper contacts an edge of the pin receiving bore causing the tray and keel to rotate into rotational alignment upon further assembly of the junction.

Claim 9 (withdrawn): A tibial component of a knee prosthesis comprising:
a tray having top and bottom surfaces;
a keel having a top end and a bottom end, the keel being engageable with the bottom surface of the tray, the keel and tray forming a male/female junction including a boss extending from one of the tray and keel and a boss receiving bore formed in the other of the tray and keel, the boss and the boss receiving bore being coaxial about a junction axis, the boss and the boss receiving bore having complimentary non-circular cross-sectional shapes perpendicular to the junction axis such that the boss and boss receiving bore form a positive engagement that resists relative rotation about the junction axis once the junction is seated along the junction axis.

Claim 10 (withdrawn): A method for implanting a modular tibial component into a knee, the method comprising:

providing separate, modular tibial tray and keel components forming a male/female junction, one of the tray and keel components having a rotational alignment pin extending from the component, the pin having a first portion extending away from one of the tray and keel and a second portion extending from the first portion further away from said one of the tray and keel, the second portion having a smaller cross sectional dimension than the first portion and a tapered portion between the first and second portions, the other of the tray and keel components having a pin receiving bore;

grossly aligning the tray and keel; assembling the male/female junction so that the second portion is received by the pin receiving bore; and

allowing the tapered portion and first portion to align the tray and keel as the male/female junction is seated.

Claim 11 (cancelled)

Claim 12 (previously presented): The instrument of claim 15 wherein attachment mechanism connects the instrument to the keel component in a reproducible known orientation such that the orientation of the handle indicates the orientation of the keel component even when the keel component is not itself visible.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The instrument of claim 15 wherein the attachment mechanism further comprises:

a first jaw attached to the handle; and

a second jaw attached to the handle, the jaws being movable relative to one another to clamp the keel component.

Claim 14 (previously presented): The instrument of claim 15 wherein the attachment mechanism further comprises:

an actuator;

a link connecting the actuator to the jaws, the actuator being movable to cause the jaws to move between a closed position in which they are relatively close together and an open position in which they are relatively further apart, the actuator, link, and jaws having a

point of singularity beyond which further movement of the actuator results in the jaws locking onto the keel in the closed position.

Claim 15 (previously presented): An instrument for gripping a tibial keel component of a modular keel and tray assembly, the keel component having a first end and a second end, the keel component being configured for insertion of the second end into a tibial bone, the instrument comprising:

a handle;

an attachment mechanism for connecting the instrument to the keel such that the handle extends outwardly from the keel component to provide a grip for manipulating the keel component; and

a cover, the cover, with the keel component connected to the instrument, selectively positionable over a portion of the keel component to shield the portion of the keel component from contamination.

Claim 16 (original): The instrument of claim 15 wherein the cover is movable while the instrument is connected to the keel component between a first position in which the cover is positioned over the portion of the keel component and a second position in which the cover is positioned away from the portion of the keel component to expose the keel component.

Claim 17 (original): The instrument of claim 16 wherein the cover is lockable in both the first and second positions.

Claim 18 (previously presented): The instrument of claim 15 wherein the attachment mechanism connects the handle to the first end of the keel component such that upon insertion of the second end of the keel component into the tibial bone, at least one of the attachment mechanism and handle abut the tibial bone and prevent the first end of the keel component from being fully inserted into the tibial bone.

Claims 19-29 (cancelled)

Claim 30 (currently amended): A tibial keel holder and tibial tray holder combination, the tibial keel holder being engageable with a tibial keel component of a modular tibial implant and the tibial tray holder being engageable with a tibial tray component of a modular tibial implant, the tibial keel component and tibial tray component forming a male/female junction between them, the combination comprising:

a tibial keel holder including a first handle, ~~an attachment mechanism~~ a clamp for connecting the tibial keel holder to the tibial keel component in a reproducible known orientation, and a cover, the cover, with the keel component connected to the tibial keel holder, selectively positionable over a portion of the keel component to shield the portion of the keel component from contamination; and

a tibial tray holder including a second handle and an attachment mechanism for connecting the tibial tray holder to the tibial tray component in a reproducible known orientation, the first and second handles forming a predetermined angle between them to give a visual indication of tray-to-keel rotational alignment.

Claim 31 (original): The combination of claim 30 wherein the proper tray-to-keel alignment is indicated when the first and second handles are parallel to one another.

Claim 32 (original): The combination of claim 30 further comprising an assembly tool for moving the tibial tray component and the tibial keel component into male/female seating arrangement, the assembly tool being engageable with the tibial tray component and the tibial keel component while the tibial tray holder is holding the tibial tray.

Claim 33 (original): The combination of claim 32 wherein the assembly tool passes through an opening in tibial tray holder to engage the tibial tray component and the tibial keel component while the tibial tray holder is holding the tibial tray.

Claim 34 (withdrawn): A method for implanting a modular tibial component into a knee, the method comprising the steps of: providing separate, modular tibial tray and keel components; engaging the tibial keel component with a tibial keel holder; forming an incision in the knee joint; preparing the tibial bone to receive the components; inserting the keel component

through the incision and engaging it with the prepared tibial bone using the tibial keel holder to manipulate the keel component; inserting the tray component through the incision and assembling it to the keel component in situ; and closing the incision.

Claim 35 (withdrawn): The method of claim 34 wherein the tibial keel holder has a handle that extends from the tibial keel component in a known orientation, the method further comprising the step of noting the orientation of the tibial keel holder handle to verify the tibial keel component orientation.

Claim 36 (withdrawn): The method of claim 35 further comprising the steps of: engaging the tibial tray component with a tibial tray holder, the tibial tray holder having a handle that extends from the tibial tray component in a known orientation; and comparing the orientation of the handles of the tibial tray holder and the tibial keel holder to verify the alignment of the tibial tray component relative to the tibial keel component.